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AUTHOR Clarke, Peter; Shelton, William
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ABSTRACT

Proceedings of the 1982 annual meeting of the Association of Vice Principals of Colleges in England are presented. In "The Future of Further and Higher Education," William Shelton discusses vocational preparation and the Manpower Services Commission (MSC), faculty development, the new 17+ Qualification or Certificate of Pre-Vocational Education, continuing education, professional industrial and commercial updating (PICKUP), and education management in further education. It is suggested that the growth of MSC-sponsored courses has been one of the most significant changes in further education in the past few years. The MSC effort to improve the vocational preparation of students draws together many agencies. Three broad aspects of continuing education are identified: vocational--for updating and retraining; self-development--for helping people to use their leisure constructively; and remedial--for helping adults who lack the most basic skills. such as literacy, mathematical skills, communication ability, and coping skills. The PICKUP program addresses the post-experience vocational needs of employees and employers. The scope of PICKUP is wide and addresses any provision relevant to the development of the individual in work. In the second paper, "College Management--A Principal's Eye View," Peter Clarke discusses role conflict of principals and vice principals, vocational education and training, links with industry and commerce, public relations, academic planning, and objective criteria for decision making and management. Public expenditures for higher education and vocational education in the United Kingdom and eight other European countries are compared. It is proposed that since competition is intense for reduced resources, planning, particularly of academic programs, is important. Vocational education must be related to the needs of rapidly-changing industry, commerce, and the professions. (SW)

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The Association of Vice-Principals of Colleges

COLLEGE MANAGEMENT — A PRINCIPAL'S EYE VIEW

[AND]

THE FUTURE OF FURTHER AND HIGHER EDUCATION

by Mr William Shelton, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State DES

and Dr Peter Clarke, Principal, Robert Gordon's Institute of Technology, Aberdeen

A Report on the Proceedings of the Annual Meeting of the Association of Vice Principals of Colleges at the Royal Festival Hall, 11 June 1982.

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THE FUTURE OF FURTHER AND HIGHER EDUCATION

Mr W Shelton - Parliamentary Under Secretary of State DES

Forgive me if I don't stick religiously to title. I think it is better to concentrate on some of the key issues currently before you than to try a rushed and therefore less than Grand Tour d'Horizon. Inevitably perhaps, because my own remit at the DES is non-advanced Further Education, my remarks will tend towards that sector.

Vocational Preparation and MSC

The growth of MSC-sponsored courses has been one of the most significant changes in Further Education in the past few years. Indeed, some people might almost think that MSC is taking over the FE system. This is quite untrue. The total proportion of non-advanced FE places taken up by MSC work of all kinds is well under 10%, and even with the new Youth Training Scheme proposals it would still only be about 20%.

Nevertheless, the MSC is an important new actor on the scene, whose part is certainly increasing. Of course, it is not the only contributor to our national effort to improve the vocational preparation of our young people. Nearly half of all young people reaching compulsory leaving age now stay on in full-time education for at least one further year, and increasing proportions of those are taking courses of direct vocational relevance. Some of these young people however need a rather broader course with a vocational orientation, and our new Certificate of Pre-Vocational Education is being introduced for that group and will draw very heavily on the expertise of the FE system.

The strength of the MSC lies in its ability to draw together many agencies in providing for the needs of the other 50%, especially the large numbers who do not get jobs.

However, as MSC's programmes develop into genuine schemes of vocational preparation which include a real education and training content, the demands on the education system will greatly increase. The proposals in the Government's White Paper on training last December implied that up to 80,000 full-time equivalent places, funded by the Commission, might be needed in the colleges. The recently published proposals of the Youth Task Group, although they vary from the Government's original proposals in quite a few respects, would imply a very similar demand on the FE system in terms of both nature and scale.

We are discussing actively with the MSC a number of issues which this raises, and I was interested to hear that your Association devoted much of its Spring Meeting in Birmingham to some of these. We want to see the fullest possible participation by the educational system in oversight of the content of schemes particularly in terms of national planning and guidance. We want to see appropriate arrangements being made also for local planning and for the overcoming of any logistical difficulties including problems of accommodation. Perhaps above all, we want to see effective programmes of staff development for those who are likely to be involved in work of this type.

Staff Development

You will all, I am sure, have read the advice which the Advisory Committee on the supply and education of teachers gave us a couple of months ago. That advice places a lot of responsibility on <u>you</u>. ACSET emphasised that, although some national and regional planning might well be necessary to ensure that opportunities were available for staff development, there was simply no substitute for planning at the institutional level. Certainly no one can expect every single college to have within itself the resources to develop its staff to do work of this type which may well be new to many of them. However, resources do exist - principally in some other college - which can be identified

/and tapped

through LEAs, Regional Advisory Councils and the regional network of FEU. The so-called Robertson shilling - the special MSC subsidy for staff development, which nearly all LEAs have taken up - offers help to enable this to happen.

ACSET therefore asked us to call upon college managers to identify the staff who would be working in this field, and then to go on - with the help of outside resources as necessary, and in particular the excellent publications of the FEU - to identify their staff development needs. I now call upon you to do precisely that. We have already indicated that we accept the ACSET advice, and hope very shortly to be communicating formally with LEAs about its implementation. But you need not wait for that to start planning. Of course, for some time, there is bound to be a good deal of uncertainty - much more than any of us would like - about the precise scale and nature of demands on individual colleges. I hope you will all be badgering your contacts in your LEA and the MSC to try to plan ahead as far as possible. For a variety of reasons, the loading on different colleges, and the proportion of MSC work which comes to colleges as against other providers, will vary a good deal from place to place. But there are already good examples of comprehensive planning, in the so-called exemplary projects experiment which MSC mounted with 12 LEAs over the past couple of years, the results of which will be published next month. They will show just what can be done when there is a will in a locality to plan coherently the educational input to MSC programmes.

So, even though we are all a long way from producing a blueprint for future educational participation in MSC schemes, there is no doubt that those schemes will form a large and increasing proportion of your work over the next couple of years. I urge you, therefore, to take the staff development implications of that seriously. If you have not already done so - and I am sure that many of you have - then do please begin to do so now.

17+ Qualification

I mentioned a few moments ago the new 17+ Qualification or Certificate of Pre-Vocational Education - an accurate but glamour-less handle which I hope we shall in due course be able to replace. I hope that you have all been able to find time to read the Government's statement published on 20 May, and perhaps even to give some thought to how this very important new measure can be most effectively implemented.

It is not, or course, that we have all suddenly had to make what used to be called an 'agonising reappraisal' of the needs of 16 to 19 year olds: the new Sixth Former has been around for some time. But I think it is now clearer than it used to be that traditional provision, although excellent for some, does not meet the needs of that significant group who neither follow an academic route to HE nor a path to a vocational commitment.

The Education Service has responded to the needs of this group with the single-subject CEE and the pre-vocational provision formulated by CGLI, TEC, BEC, RSA and other bodies and individual colleges. Such courses have broken important new ground, and I pay tribute to these efforts. But there was a widely-felt need for a qualification with a more comprehensive coverage and national currency.

The proposals in our statement took full account of responses to the suggestions for a pre-vocational qualification on the lines of the FEU's 'A Basis for Choice' set out in the consultation document "Examinations 16-18".

/We suggest

We suggest that courses should:

- offer a broad programme of General Education, but with a vocational slant;
- develop personal attributes such as self-motivation, adaptability, self-reliance, a sense of responsibility and an ability to work constructively with others;
- help each student to discover what kind of job he or she might expect to tackle with success.

We suggest a common core of some 60% of course time, common to all the options available and covering, we suggest, English, Mathematics, Science and Technology with a practical slant; Citizenship and its responsibilities; and the way in which we as a Country function.

The Options should be designed for:

1 those who have not yet made up their minds about the type of work they wish to do;

2 those who feel inclined towards technical work;

3 those who feel drawn towards clerical and business occupations and the distributive trades.

The job of producing appropriate syllabuses within the broad guidelines we have laid down has been given to a consortium of all the relevant bodies, who will act as equal partners in a joint enterprise. LEAs will also be represented.

You will expect me to say something about resources. Our statement makes clear that the 17+ has to be implemented within current cost plans: this may not be ideal but the Government has already provided for additional expenditure on 16-19 Education - no less than £100M extra for the UK this year in fact, and most of the target group would, we think, stay on anyway and are provided for in our longer-term projections. Nevertheless there will be development costs - with in-service training a big item. Many teachers, especially in schools, will be unfamiliar with the coherent programme approach, with the necessary practical slant, and with the proposed methods of assessment. We are asking ACSET for advice on how these in-service training needs may be met.

I can tell you, following a meeting I had with the Heads of the validating bodies at the end of last month, that they all shared in the aims of this venture, although there are of course still a number of important details about which we must come to agreement. We shall want to make full use of the existing experience in this field in developing this exciting initiative, and I am sure that you, as College Vice Principals, will want to play a full part.

Continuing Education

Let me move on to two other recent initiatives. As many of you will know, the Advisory Council for Adult and Continuing Education (ACACE) has recently published a report "Continuing Education: from Policies to Practice". This relates to the second leg of their remit - "To promote the development of future policies and priorities, with full regard to the concept of Education as a process continuing throughout life."

Too often continuing Education is regarded as the preserve of traditional Adult Education, but it is a wider concept, covering all Education and Training that takes place after people have completed their initial Education and Training It is based on the simple premise that however good initial Education and Training is it cannot equip a person for a life-time of 50 or so more years.

/I am

I am sure this is valid. Inevitably vocational and personal needs change. People need to plug back into the educational system, to recharge their batteries, at varying levels.

I have no wish to draw firm borderlines, but one can perceive three broad aspects of continuing education:

First Vocational - the increasingly important area of industrial, commercial and professional updating and re-training. (I shall return to this later);

Second Self-development - in this I include a wide range of provision designed to help people to use their leisure constructively;

Third Remedial - far too many adults lack even the most basic educational skills such as literacy, numeracy, elementary communication and coping skills.

Furthermore, there are those whose first language is not English, and who can't communicate effectively in our native tongue.

It is important that all involved in post-school provision should recognise that educational opportunities for adults should be widely accessible to those that need them, and it is important that provision should be guided by a coherent strategy. That is what ACACE's report is about. It is a blue-print for the future and highlights a number of priorities for action over the next 5, 10, 20 years - priorities which are relevant not only to Government but to all who are involved in this important sector of education.

For our part we shall be giving serious attention to the Report. No doubt you and your institutions will do the same, for many of the matters discussed - such as accessibility, new patterns of learning and staffing and training - are addressed particularly to institutions such as yours.

PICKUP (Professional Industrial and Commercial Up-dating)

You may have seen press coverage of the Conference on 'Continuing Education' organised by BACIE last month, when our PICKUP programme was launched. What we are trying to do through PICKUP initiative is to stimulate a more urgent and effective response from Further and Higher Education to the post-experience vocational needs of employees and employers. The scope of PICKUP is wide - any provision relevant to the development of the individual in his working life - that is, the whole period after initial education and training up to retirement. This can include things as diverse as up-dating professionals on the latest developments in their speciality; developing knowledge of foreign language, increasing awareness of the basic skills of, say, law, marketing or management and augmenting the general communication skills of all staff.

The PICKUP programme has four main prongs and it is worth recalling them here. First, the Department is holding a series of regional workshops to promote PICKUP courses. I should like to draw your attention to these because their success depends crucially on the enthusiastic participation by you and people like you throughout Higher and Further Education.

The first Workshop in the series will be held at Loughborough University on 16 June. Senior staff from Colleges, Polytechnics and Universities in the East Midlands have been invited to attend. The rest of the Workshops, about 15 in all, will be held throughout the 1982-83 academic year so that the whole of England is covered. We shall be inviting participants in due course and I hope that they will go on to develop these courses in their own colleges.

The second prong is the appointment for 3 years of a number of regional development agents to promote and co-ordinate PICKUP provision regionally. He, or she, will be expected to stimulate the most effective use of existing resources, to act as a link between employers and educational institutions and to be a source of help in carrying forward the practical impetus of the Workshops.

/Then there

Then there is curriculum development in which we again look to the FEU. The FEU is acting as our agent in sponsoring projects to develop innovatory approaches to curriculum design and development and to teaching methods. In addition the FEU will draw together teams of experts to develop course packages where there is a National need. The Open University too is active in development of PICKUP provision - £1 million of its 1982-83 grant has been ear-marked for continuing education and work is already under way in a number of areas.

The fourth prong will be the development of good information networks so that employers, employees and colleges know in some detail what provision is available.

PICKUP courses must, of course, be self-financing. There is a strong tradition of employers paying for this type of provision, and if institutions can provide the right course in the right place at the right time, the client will, I submit, be happy to pay the full cost. There is ample evidence of this. The need is there, and your role is to meet it. The Government will help as much as it can.

Education Management in FE

Before concluding I should like to say a few words about that difficult and often neglected art - management. FE is fortunate in being able to draw on a great reservoir of experience and a tradition of flexibility to help it meet the challenges which lie ahead. Those I have touched upon are but some of those challenges. But the volume, complexity and importance of these demands are perhaps unprecedented, and we cannot afford to fail to ask whether the system itself needs better to plan and prepare its response.

I was glad to hear recently that the FE sub-committee of the Advisory Committee on the Supply and Education of Teachers (ACSET) have been looking again at the discussion paper issued by their predecessors in 1978 on the subject of training for education management in FE. Changes in the organisation of learning and the delivery of services clearly make new demands for staff development. More emphasis must now be given to cost-effectiveness and accountability in education and there is a continuing trend towards greater democratisation of the decision-making process. Skills which might once have been regarded as peripheral such as marketing of the opportunities on offer and what has been called "Boundary Management" - developing relations with other agencies, commerce and industry and the public - are asuming a new significance. And, of course, these are skills which are important at all levels, including that of the teacher who needs to manage effectively the learning process with which he is directly involved. I hope the ACSET sub-committee will be able to develop this important work further.

CONCLUSIONS

I am conscious of having concentrated rather narrowly on a limited number of fairly specific topics. The picture you will have formed is not the broad canvas you may have been expecting. I hope, though, that I have focussed on highly topical developments of great importance. They call for a committed and enthusiastic response from all of us, but particularly from you and your colleagues in post-16 education. I like to think, too, that I have said enough to demonstrate the Government's interest and concern that these challenges are faced and met. You may say that we could be doing more - in the area of resources, for example - to justify that claim. But that is to digress a little from the concluding point I want to make: as Vice Principals of Colleges you are in the very midst of this exciting and challenging process of change, development, innovation and co-operation. It calls for a positive and dynamic response.

You are well placed to help bring this about. I urge you to maintain your efforts - redouble them even.

Much is at stake: great can be the rewards.

COLLEGE MANAGEMENT - A PRINCIPAL'S EYE VIEW

Dr Peter Clarke - Principal, Robert Gordon's Institute of Technology

This address is to the Association of Vice Principals of Colleges. It would be precisely the same address if I were giving a talk today to the Association of Principals of Colleges. The reason is not economy of effort but suitability. This is because the Vice Principal's main duty is to be prepared to deputise for the Principal at the drop of a hat - and the Principal should be able to stand in for the Vice Principal at similar notice.

Role conflict

Challenges to the role and responsibilities of Principals/Vice Principals are a testimony to the significance and value of such posts. We have to hope for the best .... but prepare for the worst eg if certain individuals had their way the Principal would no longer be ex-officio Chairman of the Academic Board (and the Vice Principal Deputy Chairman) nor would he have any other role than to give effect to instructions from Committees. In the vacuum created, there would be opportunity and need for an officer (local or central Government as the case may be) from outside the college to intervene in day-to-day running if the Principal worked only within this diminished role. Conversely, if the Principal maintained his key management role, the Academic Board would be relegated to a talking-shop that produced advice rather than policy and action.

These are the extremes - in practice in most colleges it would be half-way house. This is a reminder that Principals and Vice Principals must have their personal Development Programme - staff development is not just for staff.

Ups and downs

Management of Education during a period of expansion is exhilarating to all those involved. At such times almost any development is proved to be right - some quicker than others, of course. The main issues that have to be settled are orders of priority and appeals to patience. Even in such times there are parts of each organisation that are shrinking and disappearing but this happens with little friction.

In times of overall stand-still or contraction the picture is not uniform - some parts are still expanding. Then there is much friction. This is because of the claims of the growth areas for a larger gross amount from a shrinking or steady budget. Such developments have to be well chosen. They must have a short pay-back period, however defined, or the rest will rebel.

Resistance may not be by simple rejection and obstruction. It is more cleverly done by promotion of rival growth areas and thus sowing doubt and division. Principals and Vice Principals need an acute awareness of human nature and a strong sense of humour.

Changes in courses lead to redundancies. Some changes have been flagged for two decades. Those caught out have only themselves to blame if they have not prepared for change. Others are redundant through unpredictable changes eg by national planning decision - they are to be enthusiastically helped, if they are willing and able to convert.

Vocational education and Training

The total UK expenditure on Education and Training is comparable with that of its main competitors judged either by % Gross Domestic Product or per capita. The proportion spent on Higher Education in UK is significantly higher. What is remarkable, disturbing, largely ignored or swept under the carpet is the low proportion spent on vocational education and training.

/The Education

The Education and Training Statistical Bulletin 1 -1982(Commission of the European Communities) gives, for 1978, the first and most recent summary available:-

Education and Training Public Expenditure

	UK	West Germany	France	Holland	Italy	Belgium	Denmark	Ireland	Lux	"The Nine"
GDP	5.7%	4.8%	5.2%	7.6%	4.7%	7.2%	5.6%	6.7%	5.0%	5.4%
per capita[1]	99	105	110	145	67	138	124	75	101	100[2]
Higher Education[3]	20.9%	16.3%	12.5%	20.3%	10.3%	17.9%	15.5%	18.7%	2.1%	15.9%
Vocational[3,4]	8.1%	15.1%	28.2%	24.9%	3.3%	6.1%	12.4%	26.3%	n.a.	15.9%

1. 5-64 years
2. Purchasing power standards
3. Proportion of total Education and Training expenditure
4. Does not include private training organisations (n.b. West Germany)

In comparison with our competitors, East, West and South, the non-oil real income from UK is decreasing. Educationists must demonstrate benefits to the prosperity and income of the country if they want sympathy.

There is no possibility of competing effectively with forward-looking and achieving countries unless we alter the balance of expenditure to, and in, Further and Higher Education to support the new industries. Any realistic case for additional funds in Further and Higher Education must be based on a more sensible allocation for vocational preparation and up-dating. Throwing good money after bad is no answer. Extra funds must be ear-marked to be spent in the most profitable way to stimulate the redirection of industry and supporting education and training.

I am worried, as are many others in the colleges by the cool and nonchalant assurances to Government by much of industry faced with the sweeping away of many I.T.B's. With some honourable, far-sighted and realistic exceptions, there is evidence that many firms are being tempted to "economise" on training if it is not compulsory. This is short-sighted, but understandable in their current difficulties. These include not knowing what to train for.

What does HMI say?

The recent "Report by HMI on the Effects of Local Authority Expenditure Policies on the Education Service in England 1981" published in March 1982 is a fair summary. It speaks of HFE being stressed by stricter financial control and changes in student populations ..... considerable adaptive capacity .... was, and is, a generally well-provided service .... authorities and colleges using easily-applied economic measures rather than adjusting the systems .... more severe challenges to come .... more improved efficiency needed.

/NAFE

NAFE .... stretched by changes from young adult unemployment or going into employment later .... youth training schemes make demands .... complex resource and organisational implications .... unco-ordinated and duplicated provision between schools and NAFE .... authorities need more determined policies for the structure and staffing of post 16 institutions. AFE and HE .... substantial increase in full-time recruitment .... demonstrated substantial reserve capacity and their ability to use it more efficiently.

This Report is all very well, as far as it goes. It says plenty about what we are doing but little or nothing about what we should be doing - a painful and difficult problem.

Links with Industry and Commerce

Complaints by academics in universities and colleges about financial cuts have received plenty of publicity. Almost all our work in the public sector colleges and polytechnics is for industry and commerce. It is surprising, disappointing and deflating therefore that almost nothing has been said in recent years by top men in industry and commerce about cuts in colleges. Clearly there is something wrong. Either they don't think the cuts are damaging or they don't mind if they are.

While we are on this tack, it is worth remembering that we have received very low-key support or action from UK business and commerce over the main claim in our protests about punishingly high fees for overseas students viz the long-term damage to UK industry and commerce as a result of discouraging the future leaders of the industry, commerce and government of third world countries from studying in UK.

We should spend more time in keeping in touch with industry and commerce - even at the expense of fewer and shorter committee meetings in college. Relationships were, and are closer, where a college has substantial numbers in part-time, block-release and sandwich courses. However, these relationships are not so good and so important as when the future top men in industry and commerce came up by the part-time route.

Industry and commerce bake the national cake. Education takes the third largest slice in the 1982-3 forecast (in £ billion) - Social Security 33.0; Health and personal social services 17.0; Education and science, arts and libraries 15.4; Interest on debt 14.4; Defence (pre-Falklands) 14.1. The world of Education must provide industry and commerce with the trained men and women to do the baking.

It is sobering to reflect on the changes in vocational education in the public sector in the last two decades eg courses attendance patterns and professional membership routes. These have distanced the colleges from industry and commerce.

Now, most Principals, Vice Principals and staffs generally spend more time and nervous energy in reacting to and preparing for the requirements of CNAA, TEC, BEC, SCOTEC, SCOTBEC etc than they spend on discussions, planning and co-operating with industry and commerce. It is more important to be doing the right thing than to be doing something right.

Public relations

Cuts in the public sector are not the novelty that they are in the Universities. One of the more irritating questions/comments I get these days - and you too no doubt - is "I expect you'll be getting your cuts soon?" Fifteen seconds of explanation - Pilkington (1967), oil crisis/economic stringency (1973 - onwards), stricter courses approval and review mechanisms, higher and higher SSR's,

/unit costs

unit costs progressively lowered by 30% in real terms etc - and the questioner's eyes glaze over. Next time, he will make the same comment and/or question again.

The public sector is too compartmented to be readily identified in the public eye.

Academic Planning

Competition becomes keener for scarce, and shrinking, resources. Planning - particularly of Academic Development Programmes - is therefore the in-topic. We all know how difficult it is to predict accurately in any field of human activity. The differences are particularly great in vocational education the more closely it is related to the needs of rapidly-changing industry, commerce and the professions.

Examples abound of stultified proposals eg from 1975 there was a growing shortage of plant control and instrument technicians, largely through the burgeoning demands of the North Sea oil and gas developments. Various colleges expanded and/or introduced relevant courses. Then the Shah of Iran was deposed. In the resulting upset, all the British came out of Iran - and suddenly, there was no shortage in UK of such technicians!

Changes arise from technology as well as from politics. With the rapid replacement of valve and transistor-based equipment by the cheaper and far more durable silicon-chip and microprocessor devices, the shortage of communications technicians changed almost during a session, to surplus.

Some changes are long-term and therefore their effects on college's work are more predictable and plannable eg birth rate. The DES Report on Education No 97 "Pupils and school leavers: future numbers" is the most recent official forecast. It indicates that the primary school population will fall to the lowest level in 1985 (n.b. reaching tertiary education around 1997). The peak was in 1973 with 43% more (n.b. reaching us around 1985).

The 'high variant' forecast is based on a fertility rate of 2.3 in 1990 (800,000 births). The 'low variant' is assumed to fall to 1.7 (600,000 births) as in 1977. Such wide variations in estimates are a shaky basis for tight planning either of buildings or teachers.

The total of primary and secondary school pupils rose from under 5 million (1946) to a maximum of 8.5 million in 1977. Now it has fallen to 7.8 million and is estimated to fall to 6.8 million by 1990 with a modest rise thereafter. The direct effects are felt in tertiary education 7 to 10 years later.

However staying-on rates are more relevant to tertiary education. The numbers of pupils staying-on at school after 16 present problems for planners. They increased nearly four-fold between 1950 and 1970 and then wobbled, twice, between 1970 and 1978. Girls are different - they advanced steadily in numbers. Totals, boys and girls, have risen from 290,000 in 1979-80, to an estimated 340,000 in 1981-2. It would be over-optimistic to assume that this sharp rise is caused by an increasing awareness of the virtues of education and training - rather it is the cold wind blowing through industry and commerce that keeps increasing numbers of the lower social-economic groups' offspring at school or college.

The higher social groups have always made most use of the opportunities in sixth form, further and higher education. Birth rates in these groups have not fallen much in the 1970's and so the numbers staying-on are expected to fall proportionately less than their age-group totals.

'Objective criteria'

Every turn of the screw - financial, political, social - is driving people and institutions to arrange and to accept numerical criteria for a widening range

/of items

of items eg SSR, non-teaching staff ratios, equipment, materials, library, staff development, accommodation. Once criteria are adopted, the resulting criteria-based decisions are superficially 'objective' and therefore are more easily defended by a committee and special pleading can be filed away. However the establishment of such criteria is 100% judgement - and subjective-based however much it is camouflaged by argument and history.

Pre-cast quasi-objective criteria are common and accepted widely in Education eg lengths of courses, salary grades, SSR-norms, attendance requirements (students and staff), building codes. Such criteria have obvious advantages (a) people know where they are and what is to be done, or avoided (b) they save time which can be spent on other things eg arguing and special pleading on other issues not so far tied up and trussed in 'objective criteria'. Such criteria call for detailed statistics to be available on those aspects capable of measurement, quantification and identifiable existence.

To run an educational establishment on the basis of unit costs or other finance norms can foster economy - which could then allow course innovations and additions by freeing resources for investment in preparation for new work.

Unit costs or other norms can be based either on student enrolments or on qualifications gained but the advantages and disadvantages are complicated. Unit costs etc per student enrolled can lead to unsuitable enrolments being made in order to increase the income. A system of unit costs etc paid on qualifications or part-qualifications gained has a very long lead time. There would also be a temptation to lower academic standards, and resistance to the raising of standards.

Any justification of unit costs or other norms assumes that a cost - benefit relationship is appropriate in education and training. A better case can be made for it in training but debate about cost - benefit in education has raged for decades.

Is education a community service (like social work) or a national service (like the police and fire brigade) or a commercial investment like BNOC? It is by general agreement all three but the values and priorities vary vastly from person to person, from time to time, from level to level, from course to course, and from institution to institution.

The reasons for having an education system are complex. Any financial basis should preferably reflect the complexity. Simplification of finance arrangements can only be achieved at some cost in performance. A properly tuned financial system would lead to (a) a basic level of provision throughout the country (b) topping up with target - orientated investment.

The question of objective criteria for allocating resources is an issue that affects all institutions of education both in the public sector and under UGC. It becomes increasingly pressing because of diminishing resources, in real terms, at a time when change and new challenges abound.

The task of management in higher and further vocational education is to secure the best and most appropriate vocational education for as many people as possible within the resources which society is willing to make available. Mechanisms must be continually improved to ensure that the best value for money is obtained.

There are those who consider that the "unit cost" for a student in a particular discipline and/or course should be the main basis for estimates and allocations. Unit costs cover a very wide range - some of this is due to discipline differences but a lot of it arises from SSR differences. Allocations that merely continue <u>historic</u> unit costs trends dodge the need for critical review decisions. Introduction of <u>normative</u> unit costs would involve very important determinations of priorities and would affect each college's present and future courses structure profoundly.

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These and related problems are not new. They are being debated furiously at present in England and Wales, following the establishment of the National Advisory Body for Local Authority Higher Education. NAB is rapidly acquiring a database in the hope that more realistic - or defensible - allocations of funds to Polytechnics and Colleges may be made. They have established a study group on the foregoing issues and, in addition, they are co-operating with UGC in a transbinary Working Group. The aim on both sides is to develop indices of performance and resources utilisation.

All the indications are, so far, that they are temporarily at least moving away from student unit costs towards SSR as the main normative determinant in costs and as a management tool.

In the 1982-3 allocations for the Advanced Further Education Pool in England and Wales, assumptions are being made that unit costs can be reduced and that SSRs can be increased without harm to educational standards. It is clear also that Central Government plans for Further and Higher Education are based on a tightening of SSRs. The connection between SSR and educational objectives and standards is not well understood. There is plenty of anecdote but almost no useful evidence from research.

Microcomputer and DEC20 programmes are being prepared by staff of the Further Education Staff College, Coombs Lodge, to assist colleges in collecting and analysing database for measures of inputs and outputs.

The Department of the Environment Audit Inspectorate Report (1981) says "What we do hold to strongly is the necessity for nationally adopted uniform and auditable measures of input and output, and for a disciplined, uniform and auditable system for recording the inputs consumed and the outputs achieved". This Report which is being acted on in England and Wales concludes with the view that if this could be achieved in the future, relatively few performance indicators would be required, probably only the SSR and also the student retention rate.

No doubt the Council for Tertiary Education in Scotland will be giving consideration to such matters. In particular it is certain that the new Committee proposed in their Report on Organisation and Management dated September 1981 would have to set up machinery for such purposes.

It is interesting to read that Mr John S Bevan, Secretary of NAB, is saying that ".... the question for the medium term future must be how many separate national bodies the UK can afford to have at one time". While I would not go that far, it is clear that standard costs will eventually have to be agreed throughout the UK and including both university and public sector institutions.

Accountability goes with maturity. Extensive delegation of functions to College Governing Bodies, Principals and Academic Boards is a significant development of the last decade. Colleges require a substantial delegation of powers to manage their academic affairs and relevant administrative, financial and legal business with adequate efficiency and the minimum of unnecessary outside interference.

Microprocessors, minicomputers and computer technology generally bring rapid changes in teaching and learning procedures and the range and content of subject disciplines. Class and college management and structures will be changed by these developments. Distance Learning will undoubtedly play a considerable part in FE, HE and CE of the future.

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The traditionally rich mix of courses and subjects and ages and types of student will be further extended and varied to match the growing calls on FE, HE and, of course, CE. CE - Continuing Education - is likely to become the main strand in most colleges' work because of the growing impact of technology throughout society when at work at home and at neither.

Principals and Vice Principals and their Associations in the year 2000 will operate in, if 'in' will still be the right word, very different teaching and learning systems - I even hesitate to use the word 'college' in this context.

I have no hesitation in using the words 'Principal' and Vice Principal'. Leadership, individual and collective, will be required in the future even more so, if that is possible, than in the past and the present.